

OPEN GOVERNMENT PLAN

VERSION 2.0

AUGUST 2012

1.	REIMAGINING OPEN GOVERNMENT	3
2.	LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE	4
3.	ENABLING A CULTURE OF OPEN GOVERNMENT	6
4.	MAINTAINING A COMMITMENT TO GREATER TRANSPARE	NCY 7
4.1.	COMPLIANCE WITH EXISTING TRANSPARENCY INITIATIVE	ES 8
	Data.goveRulemaking IT DashboardRecovery.gov USASpending.gov Congressional Inquiries. Record Keeping	9 10 11 12
6.	PROMOTING PUBLIC PARTICIPATION	
7 .	COLLABORATION	
8.	FLAGSHIP INITIATIVES:	21
9.	NEW INITIATIVES	23

1. Reimagining Open Government

The agencies and offices that make up the United States Department of Labor impact the lives of workers every day. From creating pathways to profitable employment, ensuring safe and healthy workplaces, and protecting the rights and wages of workers and retirees across the country, serving working men and women drives our efforts.

Open government is an important tool in carrying out this mission. Improving transparency and encouraging public access to useful government information can help to create safer workplaces and strengthen protections for workers and retirees. Promoting public participation can provide a voice in the workplace, and encourage the development of new, sustainable careers. Supporting opportunities for collaboration can lead to more refined resources and better opportunities for workers.

The work of the Department is as diverse as the employees that carry it out. From our Wage and Hour Investigators who uncovered child labor violations in the blueberry fields of North Carolina, to our Employment and Training Administration staff who provide strategic investments to support workers and their families through a wide variety of grant programs, our workforce is made up of committed individuals who believe in the importance of the services and resources we provide workers.

Open government has already changed the expectations that people have of us. Our challenge is to match these expectations with our own commitment to the inherent value of transparency, participation, and collaboration, and ensure that the Department of Labor continues to serve people in the most effective and efficient means possible.

Within this document we outline a number of important steps to taken in the last two years and set as well as an aggressive agenda that we believe will have a profound impact on the way we do business and improve the services we provide.

After two years of success and lessons learned we remain committed to President Obama's call for "an unprecedented level of openness in government... to strengthen our democracy and promote efficiency and effectiveness in government."

Since we launched our initial open government plan in April of 2010, we have seen significant progress in a number of important areas. Our Online Enforcement Database has been continually updated and improved, providing the public with unprecedented access to data from across the Department of Labor. We have collaborated with other federal agencies and outside stakeholders to produce user-friendly tools that put important information in the hands of the American people.

This plan reflects a commitment to a culture of openness within DOL and outlines a series of steps we will take to break down the barriers between the public and their Department of Labor. Doing so will lead to lasting improvements in the way we make decisions, solve problem, and addresses the challenges of working men and women.

2. Leadership and Governance

The Department's Open Government Plan is fundamental to meeting and advancing our long-term strategic objectives. Only by increasing our efforts in transparency, participation and collaboration will the Department be able to fully satisfy our core mission of promoting the welfare of job seekers, wage earners, and retirees of the United States. Our vision of "good jobs for everyone" is supported through the following goals:

- To prepare workers for good jobs and ensure fair compensation;
- To ensure workplaces are safe and healthy;
- To assure fair and high quality work-life environments;
- To secure health benefits and, for those not working, provide income security; and
- To foster fair working conditions in the global marketplace.

Our Open Government Plan is not just a slogan or policy position, but a powerful strategy towards the achievement of our strategic goals. While different aspects of this plan will ultimately help achieve different combinations of our strategic goals, increased transparency, participation, and collaboration will influence the work of the entire Department, and make it better able to satisfy our core mission of promoting the welfare of job seekers, wage earners, and retirees of the United States.

Publishing information online in such a way that it is easily accessible and can be used and distributed as widely as possible dramatically alters the relationships between the Department, our community of active stakeholders, and the public. This data gives the public an unprecedented view into Department activities – and increased transparency holds workers, employers, and the Department more accountable, while ensuring that the public is able to make more informed decisions.

Meeting these goals will also require new channels of public participation—both on- and off-line—to strengthen Department decision-making and to better serve the public workforce. With today's technologies, it is far easier for citizens to interact with decision-makers within the Department of Labor, and for us to actually involve them in living out our mission. The Department will also be able to provide more responsive and accurate customer service by integrating our outreach efforts into popular online venues. We will continue to be aggressive in adopting technologies and techniques that allow us to better engage the workforce.

To further strengthen the leadership and governance structures in support of open government, the department has undertaken a number of recent initiatives.

The Office of the Chief Evaluation Officer

For the first time in the Department's history, a Chief Evaluation Office (CEO) was created within the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Policy to implement, manage, and coordinate the Department's evaluation program. This dedicated staff supports agencies in evaluating the effectiveness of programs, builds internal evaluation capacity and

expertise, ensures high standards in evaluations undertaken by, or funded by the Department of Labor, and ensures the independence of the evaluation and research functions. The Chief Evaluation Office is also responsible for making of evaluation and research findings available in an accessible, timely and user-friendly way, to better inform policymakers, program managers, and the public. The CEO office is currently developing a new process and platform to assure all evaluation results are made available for public review. Evaluation studies are currently available at http://www.dol.gov/asp/evaluation.

The Customer Service Modernization Program

The Customer Service Modernization Program is helping to improve and enhance customer service within the Department of Labor. As the main federal agency serving the needs of the American workforce, the Department's customer service enterprise directly supports "good jobs for everyone" for millions of workers. The CSMP supports the April 27, 2011 Executive Order (EO) 13571 Streamlining Service Delivery and Improving Customer Service which requires agencies to provide "competent, efficient and responsive service" to the American public. To do so, the Department of Labor is:

Leveraging Technology and Innovation by implementing a proven cloud-based Customer Relationship Management (CRM) solution to provide enhanced internet self-service and an enterprise Knowledge Base that supports public and internal users.

Strengthening the Culture and Practice of Customer Service by building awareness and understanding of customer service among all employees, and driving change by incorporating customer service metrics into annual Agency Operating Plans and individual Performance Plans.

Standing up a Customer Service program office to lead customer service from a Department wide perspective, including guiding agencies with the adoption of the CRM technology and the definition and evaluation of customer service metrics.

We intend to implement the new CRM solution in the fall of 2012 and will evaluate internal and external usage metrics and feedback to gain insights into matters including frequency of access of specific online content, feedback on helpfulness of online content, how many self-service inquiries the department receives, and the correlation of self-service inquiries to assisted inquiries.

Beginning in FY13, we will add new Customer Service elements to Agency operating plans, which will result in both external customer feedback and new operational metrics focused on customer service. These will be developed during summer 2012.

3. Enabling a Culture of Open Government

Within the Department of Labor, the Open Government Initiative is being used to frame a much larger discussion about the way we interact with the American people. From the outset, we viewed this as an opportunity to better focus on our products and their benefit to the American people. We did not want this to become an exercise in checking an "open government" box, or adding an additional layer of work for our employees.

In our initial focus group sessions, two themes emerged. There was a genuine passion and excitement about the possibilities of open government to help employees accomplish our mission. However, this excitement was often mitigated by an underlying hesitation rooted in a "been there, done that" response to the "next big idea to change government."

We have engaged in a number of activities to help battle this perception and enable a culture of open government.

The department has taken advantage of many internal communication tools to both get the message about open government activities to employees and to facilitate an open exchange of ideas.

The department's intranet website, LaborNet, is the central repository for the tools and information that DOL employees need on a daily basis. It is also an important gateway to collaboration tools, webcasts, Web chats, and the internal Wiki to share information about key departmental initiatives.

With a geographically diverse employee base, the use of webcasts to all employees has allowed the department to function more cohesively and operate as a unit. Throughout the past 24 months, we've used live webcasts to discuss the DOL Strategic Plan, share the annual Salute to Veterans, broadcast the 98th Annual Secretary's Honor Awards, host two sessions for all DOL interns, and feature other special events, such as the January 2012 visit from First Lady Michelle Obama to discuss the important issue of family care for wounded service members.

Web chats have proven to be a popular mechanism for engaging employees from across the country in important discussions. In the past 24 months, we have hosted internal web chat sessions to discuss the development of the open government plan, two fiscal year budget proposals, and more. These online discussions have been extremely easy to produce using a free, third-party, Web-based tool and have been viewed more than 7,000 times through live sessions or archived replays over the past two years.

Since our internal Wiki was launched in March 2010. agencies have embraced the Wiki and are utilizing it as a knowledge management tool, collaboration platform, and an important repository for institutional knowledge. However, improving overall awareness and usage of the Wiki remains an important focus of our internal communications efforts around open government.

In January 2012 we launched a Yammer pilot to facilitate discussions and information dissemination within a grassroots employee group focused on information technology improvements. Initial reaction to the platform has been extremely positive, and we continue to look at new ways to utilize this emerging tool.

4. Maintaining a Commitment to Greater Transparency

The ability of agencies to proactively push more and better data out to the public is a part of the changing expectations of public service. We believe that the data we collect is done so on behalf of the public and are committed to making more and better data available for public use. We will make historic data available where possible given existing legal barriers and without causing an undue cost or resource burden. This process must also actively involve input and feedback from the public to help in the prioritization of historical data. The way that the public perceives the value of our information – and the impact that releasing it may have – will be a primary driver in our efforts to improve transparency. As a part of our data prioritization, we encourage the public to provide feedback and submit requests for additional data through the various existing channels outlined on our Open Government Page (www.dol.gov/open).

Moving forward, our expectation is that **ALL** the data we collect – taking all measures to protect any personally identifiable information as well as any governing legal constraints such as the Privacy Act, the Trade Secrets Act and the Confidential Information Protection and Statistical Efficiency Act – will be made public online and in downloadable formats. Accordingly, our agencies will plan internal resources, grants, contracts, and budgets to support the ongoing publication of data. Over time, this will encompass adopting standardized clauses (e.g., for contracts and other legal instruments and documents) and operational practices that articulate a preference or need for underlying raw data to be provided in a structured, machine-processable format. Such clauses and practices would also state our intentions to release to the public information on grant and contract outcomes, to the extent permitted by legal and security requirements.

Our data inventory will be updated on a quarterly basis and a summary will be posted online. A full list of DOL's data collection projects is available at http://www.reginfo.gov/public/do/PRAMain.

To facilitate this process, without causing an undue burden on existing resources, we have identified the following principles to prioritize data.

Our highest priority will be data which:

- 1. Advances one or more of the Department's five strategic goals:
 - To prepare workers for good jobs and ensure fair compensation;
 - To ensure workplaces are safe and healthy;
 - To assure fair and high quality work-life environments;
 - To secure health benefits and, for those not working, provide income security; and
 - To foster fair working conditions in the global marketplace.
- 2. Responds to the needs of an identified audience and inspires new forms of citizen engagement.
- 3. Provides new insight into Department activities because the dataset was previously unpublished, previously unavailable online, or previously unavailable in a bulk machine-processable format.
- 4. Enables third party civic innovation by conforming to established data best practices:
 - Primary—exposes the underlying raw source data not aggregate statistics.
 - Structured—available in a machine-processable format such as XML, CSV or other.
 - Timely—includes the most recent data available and is updated on a regular basis.
 - Usable—provides an understandable description of the dataset and its context and makes available the data schema and other relevant metadata.
 - Complete—includes all collected data of this type as described, except where constrained by privacy or legal barriers.

4.1. Compliance with Existing Transparency Initiatives

Data.gov

Beginning in May 2009, the Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) began to work with DOL agencies to publish datasets on Data.gov. We immediately published 34 datasets from the Bureau of Labor Statistics as a strong start to compliance with the guidance and direction of transparency in Government.

The OCIO coordinated with all DOL agencies to work together towards providing other valuable datasets from within the Department. To date DOL has 53 raw datasets and 13

data extraction tools on the site that include some data that were not publicly available or available for download.

<u>eRulemaking</u>

DOL was one of the initial partners in the eRulemaking initiative and all of our regulatory steps seeking public input (e.g., Requests for Information, Advance Notices of Proposed Rulemakings, Notices of Proposed Rulemakings) are posted on Regulations.gov for comment. This allows the public to search and view any federal agency's rulemaking dockets. Previously, a person would have to visit each agency to inspect or make copies of docket materials (i.e., the rule, supporting studies/documents, all public comments received on the rule) – now this can be done though one portal. This also allows for cross-agency searches to see what any federal agency is doing with respect to a particular topic.

A number of DOL agencies have also effectively used <u>Regulations.gov</u> for non-rulemaking Federal Register notices. The Department of Labor's Bureau of International Labor Affairs (ILAB) regularly utilizes the site to solicit broad input from stakeholders around the world. Whether it is to gather information about goods from countries produced by child labor or forced labor under the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2005 (TVPRA), information about efforts by countries to eliminate the worst forms of child labor, or its procedural guidelines for implementing its monitoring responsibilities, ILAB posts information gathering efforts on the regulations.gov portal.

ILAB has also utilized the <u>regulations.gov</u> tool gather information on best practices to eradicate child labor and forced labor as part of its overall research under its TVPRA responsibilities. This has provided an effective means to collect substantive comments in a manner that is fully open and accessible to the public. Those who wish to make comments can readily see the input of other stakeholders and provide relevant information. ILAB strives to conduct its international work in as transparent and open manner as possible, and publishing its notices requesting information or feedback on regulations.gov is an integral part of this process.

In addition to actively participating in www.regulations.gov, we also created a landing page within our own Web site to provide visitors with a one-stop source for comprehensive information about our current and proposed regulatory actions: www.dol.gov/regulations. This site provides videos explaining the impact of proposed regulations as well as listing the current and upcoming opportunities to provide comments, and the transcripts from our extensive regulatory web chats.

Some DOL agencies, such as EBSA, post the public comments on the agency website in an effort to improve accessibility for the broader public. The comments are posted with links to the Federal Register documents (RFI's, proposed rules, interim final rules requesting comment) as well as testimony from public hearings, if held. Many of the regulations have had a lot of public interest with hundreds of comments submitted. The

index of the comments posted allows visitors to see who commented and then read those comments they wish to read.

IT Dashboard

The <u>IT Dashboard</u> enables federal agencies and the general public to view details of federal information technology investments and track spending, performance, and progress of technology investments over time.

The performance of each of our major IT investments is rated on three factors: cost, schedule, and a CIO rating. Each month the DOL program office provides an update of the investment's actual costs, as well as actual accomplishments of the program's activities for that month. These two factors are compared against the planned activities for that month when the investment first began. The variance is then an indicator of how well the investment is achieving its performance goals at that point of its development. The third factor, the CIO assessment of the program, is primarily based on a risk assessment associated with the investment achieving its intended results.

Integrating Federal IT Dashboard with DOL IT

We have embraced this transparency program since its inception and have had a long standing quarterly control review process for all of our major IT investments. Since the announcement of the IT Dashboard, we have integrated the associated requirements of the IT Dashboard with our program reviews and other IT governance processes. The CIO ratings are applied each month, and the entire process is managed by the Office of the Chief Information Officer resulting in timely updates with data quality reviews that results in an accurate portrayal of DOL's IT investments.

Assessing Our IT Investments

In July 2009, in accordance with Federal CIO Rating guidance, the DOL CIO assigned initial CIO IT investment evaluation ratings to all DOL major IT investments posted on the Federal IT Dashboard. Monthly DOL CIO evaluation updates focus on assessment of the risks associated with each investment achieving its intended results.

Focusing on Timely Updates and Data Quality

Since the Federal IT Dashboard was released, DOL has consistently updated its IT investment information on the Federal IT Dashboard by the 15th of the reporting month. This schedule results in accurate and quality performance data from the previous month that keeps the public up to date with timely investment information.

Recovery.gov

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) created the Recovery Accountability and Transparency Board, which maintains Recovery.gov so the American people can see how ARRA money is being distributed by federal agencies and how the funds are being used by the recipients. The Board's goals are to provide transparency in

relation to the use of ARRA-related funds and prevent and detect fraud, waste, and mismanagement.

DOL fully complies with Office of Management and Budget guidance for ARRA implementation and reporting. On a weekly basis, DOL submits an ARRA Financial and Activity Report to Recovery.gov and posts the report to www.dol.gov/recovery to provide the public with a snapshot of its ARRA-related obligations and outlays. The report includes a breakdown of funding by Treasury Account Fund Symbol, Award Type, and State, as well as a narrative description of the past week's major ARRA-related developments.

DOL utilizes its www.dol.gov/recovery Web site to provide important data and narratives regarding its ARRA-funded programs and efforts, including working training, unemployment benefits, and expanded access to continued health benefits.

USASpending.gov

USASpending.gov is the Office of Management and Budget's public requirements of the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006 (Transparency Act or FFATA). Data on <u>USASpending.gov</u> are largely obtained from the Federal Procurement Data System (FPDS), which contains information about federal contracts, and the Federal Assistance Award Data System (FAADS), which contains information about federal financial assistance such as grants and assistance. Data are also obtained from agency submissions via OMB's FAADS PLUS file format. DOL does not have direct loans, loan guarantees, defaulted guaranteed loans or insurance.

Since 2007, DOL has complied with USASpending.gov reporting cycles as documented on the site's data transmission and compliance dashboard. Current performance is based on the timeliness and content of data submission. To view current DOL USASpending.gov performance, visit: http://www.usaspending.gov/data/dataquality.php

To send assistance data to USASpending.gov, DOL uses its E-Grants system. Grant data captures the requisite information from Grant Awards, which is transferred into periodic data files for upload to USASpending.gov on a monthly cycle. DOL has instituted a data validation process to ensure the consistency and accuracy of its grants award data.

DOL uses its E-Procurement system (EPS) to collect, report, and transmit contract award data to FPDS. DOL relies upon the data validation and edit-check features found within FPDS to ensure the accuracy and completeness of its contract award data. These financial data are transmitted to USASpending.gov by FPDS and OMB then posts these data on USASpending.gov on a monthly basis.

DOL has consistently complied with <u>USASpending.gov</u> reporting requirements to date; however, DOL is currently developing its Open Government Data Quality Framework and Data Quality Plan, which will formalize a strategy to enhance the quality of spending information.

Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)

The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) has taken several steps at the Departmental level to ensure that President Obama's instructions regarding the "Presumption of Openness" are carried out to the fullest. Immediately upon receipt of the January 21, 2009 memoranda, the Department disseminated the information to all Agency Heads. In addition, the Office of the Solicitor (SOL) promptly forwarded the instructions to all personnel with FOIA responsibilities. In June of 2009 DOL-wide FOIA training was held with the new policy being the centerpiece of the training. Both the Director and Chief of Staff of the Department of Justice's (DOJ) Office of Information Policy participated in the training and DOL's Deputy Secretary gave a key note speech stressing his commitment to openness. These steps build on the efforts DOL made to improve its FOIA process in response to Executive Order 13392 and the OPEN Government Act amendment to FOIA.

DOL is a diverse agency with responsibilities ranging from enforcing worker protection laws to collecting labor statistics to overseeing worker benefit programs, the unemployment insurance program and providing labor certifications for worker visas. As a result, DOL has a decentralized FOIA program to meet the needs of each component's FOIA customers. For our enforcement agencies, the most frequent type of FOIA request is a request from an attorney or an individual engaged in or contemplating, private litigation related to a matter investigated by DOL. For example, an attorney pursuing or defending a private tort suit related to a workplace accident investigated by OSHA will request OSHA's investigation file. Another frequently requested type of record is a labor certification file sought by an immigration attorney. A final type of frequently requested record is a first party request that is responded to under the Privacy Act for a claim file such as an injured Federal employee requesting a copy of his/her Federal Employees' Compensation Act claim file.

In order to best respond to this diversity of requests, each agency has been given flexibility to design a program that meets its needs. Most agencies have delegated their disclosure responsibilities to officials at the Office Director or Division Chief level in Washington, as well as to their regional offices. Others have delegated their field FOIA responsibilities to district or area offices. Conversely, some small agencies handle all of their FOIA requests centrally in Washington, DC. The differing agency practices are explained partly by the number of requests that agencies receive and partly by the nature of the programs they administer.

Additional information about our FOIA process is available at http://www.dol.gov/dol/foia/.

Congressional Inquiries

The Office of Congressional and Intergovernmental Affairs (OCIA) has primary responsibility for analyzing and responding to Congressional requests for information. The Assistant Secretary for Congressional and Intergovernmental Affairs oversees a staff

of Legislative Liaisons responsible for each of the specific offices and agencies within the Department of Labor. Inquiries that specifically involve the Secretary of Labor are also routed through the Executive Secretariat within the Office of the Secretary (OSEC). OCIA also notifies congressional offices regarding grants awarded by the Department and provides direction and coordination for all congressional and intergovernmental liaison and outreach activities for the Department of Labor.

OCIA assists the Secretary, Deputy Secretary, agency heads, and departmental staff to develop effective programs and strategies to promote the Department's goals and objectives on Capitol Hill as well as among state and local officials. In addition to congressional and intergovernmental affairs units, OCIA also includes the Department of Labor's Regional Representatives.

A record of the recent congressional testimony by the Department's senior leadership is available online at http://www.dol.gov/ sec/media/congress/main.htm.

Record Keeping

The Department is committed to meeting its Records Management requirements and ensuring the timely transfer of all permanently valuable records to the National Archives. The Department's Records Management Program objectives are to:

- Provide effective control, appropriate security, and management over the creation, maintenance, use and disposition of all records within the Department regardless of recording media.
- Ensure that the records accurately reflect the business practices, polices, and transactions of the Department.
- Foster effective and economical Departmental record keeping.
- Ensure care, preservation and disposition of the Department's records.
- Coordinate records management activities with other information management and Departmental activities.
- Ensure all DOL employees are well-informed of their records management responsibilities.
- Prevent the unauthorized access, removal, and loss of Departmental records.

A detailed description of the Department's records management program is available at http://www.dol.gov/dol/records/.

DOL Declassification Programs

The Department of Labor has not had classification authority in over thirty (30) years. As a result, we do not have an active program for the declassification of documents, nor do we have staff assigned to this task. A small number of historic documents which were classified before 1978 are maintained by the National Archives and Records Administration, Federal Records Center Program under a joint Memorandum of Understanding.

5. Recent Efforts to Improve Transparency

5.1. Putting data in the hands of the American Public

Over the last two years the Department of Labor has conducted a number of projects to increase the awareness and use of important agency data. In addition to posting relevant data for distribution via Data.gov, we have also engaged in projects to ensure that we are making data more easily available to the public through our websites as well as making information available on emerging mobile platforms.

In October 2011 we launched two different contests on Challenge.gov designed to raise awareness of important DOL data and promote its use by the general public. Our informACTION challenge leveraged existing technology to raise public awareness about employer compliance with federal workplace laws. Multiple applications were developed utilizing DOL enforcement data that in many cases incorporated access to mainstream applications like Yelp!, Google, Yahoo! and Bing. Consumers, workers and employers can now more easily identify OSHA and Wage and Hour's enforcement history of restaurants, shops and hotels or motels in relation to federal wage and hour and workplace safety laws.

Since the InformACTION App Challenge concluded, we have been working with winning participants to measure and evaluate the utilization of winning applications by the public, their reach and incorporation into DOL initiatives. DOL will continue to incorporate winning applications into its outreach efforts due to our belief that by making DOL's enforcement data more useable to the public, it also provides strong incentives to employers to comply with federal workplace laws because their compliance track record is now readily accessible to the public.

The <u>Occupational Employment Statistics Challenge</u> encouraged developers to provide workers with interactive tools to explore salary and job statistics by geography, identify in demand occupations, and explore the local job market,. Multiple applications were developed utilizing Bureau of Labor Statistics data and local Labor Market Information.

Since the conclusion of the OES App Challenge DOL has been working with winning participants to measure and evaluate the utilization of winning applications by the public, their reach and incorporation into DOL initiatives. DOL will continue to incorporate winning applications into its outreach efforts due to our belief that OES data when shared effectively via data liberation initiatives, efficiently assists individuals in planning their education, changing careers, relocating, or negotiating compensation packages by generating data visualizations of customized results on wages, employment growth, unemployment, and industry outlook based on geographic location, occupation, industry or other user-selected criteria.

5.2. Reducing Improper Payments through Greater Transparency

On September 14, 2011, the Department launched a new web page -- http://www.dol.gov/uiimproperpayments -- to highlight improper payment rates through the Unemployment Insurance system of each state along with their progress in implementing proven solutions to reduce these improper payments. The site features a map that clearly identifies each state's improper payment rate and overpayment dollar total over a 3-year sample period. Clicking on an individual state provides additional rate information across identified root causes, as well as status updates on each state's progress in implementing nine core strategies identified by the Department for reducing improper payments.

During a Cabinet meeting on September 14, 2011, Vice President Biden and Secretary Solis announced the creation of this site as part of the federal government's effort to reduce waste, fraud and abuse. That announcement also included the award of approximately \$192 million in Integrity Supplemental Budget Requests to 42 states for projects related to program integrity and performance and for system improvements, as well as the identification of six "High Priority" states targeted for customized technical assistance in reducing their rate - Arizona, Colorado, Indiana, Louisiana, Virginia, and Washington.

At the time of this announcement, the 2011 IPIA rate (covering the period July 2010 to June 2011) was 11.35 percent. As of March 2012, the estimated total overpayment rate for fiscal year (FY) 2011 improved to 11.0 percent, which represents a decrease of 0.35 percent 2011 IPIA rate.

In October 2011, the Department enhanced this Web-site to highlight state improvements and success stories, added additional charts to each state page to reflect the responsibility for overpayments, and provided updated data to reflect the final Improper Payment Information Act (IPIA) data for the 12-month period ending June 30, 2011.

In March 2012, the Department launched additional enhancements to the Web-site. These new updates include a UI fraud "tips and leads" gateway that provides the public with a one-stop resource for connecting with state websites and tip hotlines to report potential UI claimant and employer fraud. The Department added the Treasury Offset Program (TOP) to the list of core strategies identified by the Department, and reported on state progress in implementing TOP. The Department also released UI claimant and employer messaging products and tools including a print "Top Ten" list poster for claimants, a fact sheet on improper payments for employers, and two public service announcements recorded by the Secretary. These resources were posted to the Strategies section of the Web-site to enable on-demand distribution to state workforce agencies.

For the 27-week period from September 14, 2011, through March 22, 2012, the Web-site had 143,589 page visits and 177,188 page views.

The Department is providing quarterly updates to the Web-site using the calendar below, which reflects the audit completion standard established for UI's Benefit Accuracy Measurement survey.

Reporting Quarter	BAM Audit Completion Date	Site Update By	Site Updates		
January – March	June 30	July 15	Estimated annual improper payment rate data tableState status reports		
April – June	September 30	October 15	 Map and state root cause pie charts with final 3-year average IPIA data (July-June) State status reports 		
July – September	December 31	January 15	 Estimated annual improper payment rate data table State status reports 		
October – December	April 30	May 15	Estimated annual improper payment rate data tableState status reports		

In addition to these regular updates, in 2012 the Department also plans to revisit the core strategies included on the website to ensure they reflect new priorities as they are established. In addition, the Department will examine inclusion of additional data on the main map page and state sub-pages to ensure that state improvements in the improper payment rate are reflected accurately.

6. Promoting Public Participation

In many ways participation and collaboration are elements of successful communication. To engage the public in our work we must first be able to describe our work to them in a meaningful way. We have made significant improvements and investments in creating more effective and efficient avenues for communicating with the public including:

Re-launching a Web site responsive to public feedback

In 2011, the Department of Labor participated in the <u>First Fridays Product Testing Program</u> sponsored by the General Services Administration (GSA). This usability testing session monitors three participants as the complete common DOL.gov website tasks. The experience was eye-opening, and led us to rethink the layout and focus of DOL.gov. As a result we:

Revised the DOL gov home page to enhance usability and readability.

Based on the feedback we received from this free testing, we darkened the home page font, lightened the background color, adjusted the header to remove a confusing text box

and, most importantly, we prioritized the placement of the sections of the home page to match what users need the most.

Changed our search engine.

Providing great search results across the vast amount of content available through our websites is a challenge. With so many documents available in our search index, a simple search for a term like "training" would return all of the correct documents, but without regard to the popularity or relevancy of the different results. Furthermore, it required a great deal of processing power to create and maintain accurate search indexes, resulting in it taking some time for the newest content to be included in search results. The DOL.gov search engine is now powered by the free USASearch affiliate program offered by GSA. The "out of the box" search results are much more relevant than our prior search results because it harnesses the power of a world-class search engine and the program offers us a great amount of control for suggesting the best links for certain search results and ensuring that new content or breaking news is included in the search results.

Are asking for public feedback.

In March 2012, we added a feature at the top of pages on DOL.gov that asks "Was this page helpful?". This feature allows us to get your reaction to the specific content you are using on our website. By answering simple question, users can provide important feeback on if they particularly like a page or couldn't find what they needed easily. We are tracking what pages receive negative feedback and targeting those pages for updates. We can also track the ratings of a page over time, so we'll know if our changes are improving public satisfaction with the content.

Publishing a weekly newsletter that reaches more than 270,000 subscribers.

Much of the content in <u>our newsletter</u> is focused on stories from across the country that show the very real benefits that our programs, grants, and enforcement actions have had for the public. Chanette Purser-Smith, a Job Corps graduate who is now the head chef at a popular San Francisco eatery, contributed her own words to the newsletter saying, "Job Corps supported my focus and drive and instilled in me a sense of pride in my work. I am thankful for the taxpayers' funding of such programs." The newsletter encourages readers to provide feedback via email, which has resulted in adjustments to formats and driven the inclusion of additional content.

6.1. Conducting Online Rollouts of Major DOL Initiatives

Our Web site provides useful resources and opportunities for the public to engage in discussions on our annual <u>budget</u>, <u>regulatory agenda</u>, and <u>strategic planning process</u>. These pages include scheduled public web chats which use free, publically available web chat software to respond to public inquiries. Traditionally, these initiatives have been limited to stakeholder groups and members of the public who live and work in Washington, DC. Online rollouts have allowed us to reach a much larger audience than traditional methods and engage members of the public from around the country in this process. While the chats are "live" events, the software produces instant transcripts which not only allow for continued viewing, but also lower the costs of transcription services.

Our Web chats have been a great way to directly connect with citizens and answer their questions in real time. We've used them for many different types of events, but the most well-attended chats are the ones we've conducted for our semi-annual regulatory agenda rollouts, our annual budget rollouts and for strategic planning. The chats are powered by a free, third-party, Web-based software package that has been very easy to implement and use at a moment's notice.

Over the last two years, we have reached more than 40,000 people through nearly 35 hours of online discussions, Here is a breakdown of the regulatory agenda, strategic planning and budget chats held over the past two years:

Chat Type	Combined	Questions	Questions	Total
Chat Type	Length	Received	Answered	Readers
Strategic Planning – April 2010	9.75 Hours	956	527	5,898
Regulatory Agenda – April 2010	6 Hours	254	192	7,386
Regulatory Agenda – July 2011	7 Hours	514	374	7,021
Regulatory Agenda – January 2011	6 Hours	843	354	10,849
Budget Chat – February 2010	2 Hours	281	110	2,178
Budget Chat – February 2011	2 Hours	376	188	3,723
Budget Chat – February 2012	2 Hours	370	141	3,726
Total	34.75	3594	1886	40,781
Total	Hours			

In addition to conducting live web chats on DOL's <u>budget</u>, <u>regulatory agenda</u>, and strategic planning process, we have also used chat technology to give the public the opportunity to provide feedback on a number other useful initiatives. Our worker protection agencies have used live chats to get feedback on upcoming rules. Our Women's Bureau also used live chats to talk about job opportunities for women in green <u>technologies</u> and the Bureau of Labor Statistics conducted a live discussion on the release of the March employment report featuring statistical experts from their <u>Current</u> Population Survey (CPS) and Current Employment Statistics (CES) programs.

Many of these initiatives were initially met with internal anxiety and resistance. By demonstrating and sharing success internally, we have been able to build support for these new strategies, and encourage innovative thinking in additional areas. We will continue to utilize this robust outreach tool and will actively promote this capability to the agencies of the Department of Labor.

6.2. <u>Demonstrating the Value of Social Media</u>

We have made a commitment to use social media platforms like <u>Twitter</u>, <u>Facebook</u>, and <u>YouTube</u> to not only push out useful information, but also use these avenues as a means for the public to ask important questions and provide meaningful feedback. Using the resources of our award winning National Call Center, combined with the expertise of our

agency public affairs directors, we have been able to provide quick, accurate responses to public inquires. The responses that we post are visible to the public and drive additional conversation. As a result, we have seen these tools also become communities where members of the public share useful resources and information related to our programs and services.

Through our continued efforts to increase effectiveness over the past two years, we have learned that partnering with stakeholders is the most effective way to engage and reach our target audience. For example, the Women's Bureau recently launched *Why Green Is Your Color: A Woman's Guide to a Sustainable Career* to educate women on the emerging green economy. We utilized traditional social media tactics, including Facebook postings and Tweets, and received our normal rate of return. However, our true success was achieved through partnering with the Department of Energy and other federal agencies for a Twitter chat on women and #STEM. During the hour long conversation, our #STEM hashtag was trending and the @USDOL Twitter account was globally ranked number ten for influence.

Since the publication of our initial open government plan in April 2010, we have seen widespread growth across these platforms as we explore new methods to integrate them into our mission. Facebook (+11,281 likes), Twitter (+30,938 followers), YouTube (+220,670 video views), Flickr (+321,915 photo views), and the DOL Blog (+38,140 page views) have all become active channels to use in spreading the word about our work and engaging with stakeholders in more meaningful ways.

7. Efforts to Increase Collaboration

Throughout the last two years, our ability to effectively collaborate internally within the Department of Labor, work together across the federal system, and tap into the creativity and imagination of external partners has grown exponentially. By leveraging emerging technology platforms and focusing attention on building effective partnerships to share resources, we have worked together to tackle projects with the ability to make a real and lasting impact on the American workforce.

7.1. <u>Enabling Collaboration through Developer.DOL.gov</u>

Our initial open government plan called for the creation of a developer's corner focused on enabling use of Labor Department data and promoting greater collaboration with outside organizations. In the Spring on 2011, http://developer.dol.gov launched with access to an application programming interface (API) that provides instant, light-weight, and easy to access data for developers of Web and mobile apps.

The API provides access to 19 datasets containing a total of 80 individual tables. In addition to making the API available to developers, DOL was the first federal agency to provide software development kits (SDKs) and sample code to developers to make using it even easier. The SDKs contain code that can be included in 3rd party applications that

take care of the connection to the API as well as making requests and retrieving data. This enables those with a great idea and even basic programming skills to start developing apps with DOL data. Initially, developer.dol.gov launched with four SDKs. Today, there are six SDKs and sample code for the seven most popular Web and mobile development platforms.

To ensure that we are able to collect effective metrics and monitor performance issues, DOL requires developers to obtain a "key" to make requests against the API. This key can be obtained by any developer who requests one. To date, there have been 6,856,768 calls against the DOL API, 4,484,102 from the LaborStats app alone.

Another innovation is our "API Sampler," which allows developers to get a sample of what is returned by the API for testing and validation purposes. Links to the sampler are on the main page of developer.dol.gov as well as on each dataset's page.

Our most recent innovation is the packaging of DOL's API and SDK documentation into a downloadable ebook in ePub format. This optional way of accessing DOL's developer documentation provides all of the necessary information in a simple, open standards based format that the developer can take with them.

7.2. <u>Collaborating to Promote Equal Pay.</u>

Nearly 50 years after President Kennedy signed the Equal Pay Act, on average women are still paid less than their male counterparts for doing comparable jobs. This pay gap means that each time the average woman starts a new job, she's likely to start from a lower base salary, but it also means that over time the pay gap between her and her male colleagues is likely to become wider and wider. For the average working woman, the pay gap means \$150 less in her weekly paycheck, \$8,000 less at the end of the year, and \$380,000 less over her lifetime. For women of color and women with disabilities, the disparity is even bigger.

With that as the backdrop, the Department of Labor worked closely with the National Equal Pay Task Force, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the Department of Justice, and a host of celebrity judges to design a challenge to help educate women about, and help close the pay gap. Many of the tools submitted as part of the challenge were focused on increasing access to pay data data by gender, race, and ethnicity and provided features that are helpful to to women throughout their careers as they negotiate starting pay, request a promotion or a raise, or consider switching fields to a more lucrative career path.

The winning applications were announced on Equal Pay Day (April 17, 2012) and a special Twitter Chat was held a few days later to raise awareness of the issue and the winning entries. During the Twitter chat, both @USDOL and #EqualPay were trending topics.

7.3. Summer Jobs+ Bank and API

Building on the success of the Veterans Job Bank, an online search tool that allows employers to list jobs especially Veterans, DOL leveraged this technology to create a similar search platform aimed at helping provide pathways to employment for low-income and disconnected youth in the summer of 2012. The project utilized the industry recognized JobPosting schema from www.schema.org, and a custom search engine to aggregate online postings into one easy to use tool for your people.

To enable additional collaboration around the tool, we also published an API providing access to the search results through http://developer.dol.gov and worked with the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy to conduct the first ever White House Code Sprint. As a result, third-party developers are using the API to build applications for mobile devices and even a job search tool that works within Facebook. The Summer Job+Bank will be launched in May 2012,

8. Flagship Initiatives

At the Department of Labor we remain committed to thinking big and tackling some of the most important challenges through our open government work. In the past two years we have made significant improvements to our flagship efforts to turn enforcement data into information that is readily accessible and easily used. In addition we have made more grant application and award information available online than any federal agency.

8.1. Online Enforcement Database

The initial version of the database was launched in April 2010, providing the public with access to enforcement data collected by Employee Benefits Security Administration (EBSA), Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP), Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA), and Wage and Hour Division (WHD) in one location and searchable along a series of common dimensions for the very first time. In addition to the added value of access to aggregate enforcement data, this database also provides access to a variety of previously unpublished enforcement information.

Prior to this public database, only OSHA and MSHA made their enforcement data available online. For other DOL agencies, accessing this data required submitting requests directly to the agencies and waiting for a response, which can often be frustrating and discouraging. In some cases, accessing the data would have required submitting a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request. In addition, once an individual had all the data they'd requested, there was no easy way to cross-reference it. The DOL Searchable Enforcement Database provided a single, easy to search, point of entry to the

Department's enforcement records. Since the initial launch, the site was updated quarterly, adding features and functionality.

In June 2011, the Department released a completely overhauled Version 2.0 with enhanced usability, data visualization capabilities, and enriched datasets. The look and feel of the site was completely revamped to provide visual access to the data utilizing open source mapping capabilities to display OSHA and MSHA Inspections and Violations data for last 30 days. In addition, users can drill down to view the individual inspection record or the company or mine history. The map view also provides census demographic data for the State (Source: Census 2010 (when available) and 2009 American Community Survey, providing a larger context for agency data. Additional features added in version 2.0 include:

- Dashboards showing aggregated metrics for each agency dataset;
- The MSHA Data Explorer, which gives users the opportunity to visualize, animate and compare mines history of inspections, violations, accidents, and more using a motion chart;
- Enhanced export capabilities including multi-tab Excel workbooks;
- Graphing capabilities and filters;
- Customizable search result views;
- Enriched MSHA & OSHA datasets using geolocation API for map display;
- Data catalog providing metadata and datasets for download in machine readable formats.

The Enforcement Database has spurred thinking about how we can use our data more effectively to convey the mission and value of the Department's work. The site also provided seed code to other agencies to leverage for their internal development and is promoting disciplined data curation, data visualization and metadata usage. The database has also been used heavily by press organizations and outside stakeholders to look at industry and corporate trends

Over the next twelve months we will:

- Develop labs showcasing a uses for OSHA and WHD data
- Develop a visual and intuitive query builder to allow users to build their own queries and export or display results
- Add additional datasets to the site including OSHA injury and illness data
- Geocode WHD data and integrate in map display
- Continue to enrich data with external data sources

8.2. Open Grantmaking Initiative

In his Memorandum on Open Government the President specifically emphasized the need for greater transparency into the expenditure of federal funds. In this spirit, in 2010 we have launched a <u>Grants Map</u> to advance the level of transparency on all grant awards: both formula and competitive. The map displays aggregate totals by agency and by state for grant awards made in program year 2009 and fiscal year 2010 and offers the public –

for the first time – a unified gateway to access all DOL grant award information. In addition to promoting greater accountability within our grants, this was the first step in a larger plan to engage the public through a more collaborative grant making process.

This Open Grantmaking Initiative, launched in September 2011, provides for the first time a central location on DOL's website where the public can search, view and download abstracts of all grant applications for the Department's discretionary grant programs, the technical proposals of discretionary grant applications selected for award, as well as an assortment of financial and programmatic information on all DOL competitive grant projects. The website also links prospective applicants to tools and resources needed to craft a competitive grant application.

While other cabinet level agencies have introduced transparency on a few signature grant projects, DOL is the first agency to introduce transparency to all of its competitive grants. Since launching this website in September 2011, we have introduced additional functionalities such as new data download and mapping capabilities as well as enhancements to the search and display features. Through this initiative, we have been able to make 756 grant application abstracts from all applicants and 204 technical proposals from winning applicants available online.

While much of this initiative was focused on making information available to the public, it has led to important internal changes as well. In order to publish the information efficiently, we developed a single internal administrative interface for employees to manage grant application documents and to cross-match other program metrics. This database provides easy access to financial and program information of all DOL grants and makes communicating this information to stakeholders and grantees more seamless and timely.

9. New Initiatives

As part of our continued efforts to support open government at the Department of Labor, we plan to do the following over the next year:

Publish Office of Foreign Labor Certification data more useable formats.

Data on labor certifications issued through the H-1B, H-2A, H-2B, and PERM programs are frequently requested by Congress, media organizations, and the public and has important policy implications. The data is currently available only as a MS Access download, which can be very confusing for the public, and makes the data inaccessible for some. We will explore additional format options including raw data files as well as a search and export interface.

Make Job Corps Center performance data more readily available.

The Job Corps program is administered by the Department of Labor through local center operators. Center performance varies greatly, and while the Job Corps office does a wonderful job of compiling performance information for its annual report to Congress,

this information can be difficult to find online and is only currently available as a PDF report. To improve access to this important information, the Department will look at additional formats and interfaces to support greater transparency of Job Corps performance information at both the center and national levels.

Create a Job Credentials Database and User Forum.

The Employment and Training Administration is in the process of compiling a database of industry recognized credentials that are currently used in decision making by employers or offered as part of training programs. The perceived value of these credentials can vary widely. Making this information available, and enabling an open dialogue about which credentials employers value most will help those looking into training opportunities or exploring career options make better informed decisions about the programs they pursue.

Publish USERRA Data in more user-friendly formats.

The Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA) generally requires employers to reemploy eligible Veterans returning to their civilian employment after a period of service in the uniformed services and to provide training to restore competency in duties, restore seniority, status, pay, pensions, and other benefits that would have accrued but for the employee's absence due to military service. The Department of Labor's Veterans Employment and Training Service initiates investigations based on complaints, which may then be referred to the Justice Department. Currently the data and statistics surrounding USERRA are only available in annual PDF documents, though more timely and additional data points are frequently requested through the FOIA process. Providing greater transparency of this information in a more timely manner will be particularly important as more and more soldiers return from missions in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Increase transparency of Office of Labor Management Standards data

The Office of Labor Management Standards (OLMS) conducts enforcement activities that promote union democracy and financial integrity in private sector labor unions. This information is frequently requested, but not currently available as part of our enforcement database or in searchable, machine readable formats.

Publish a user friendly database of closed and re-purposed auto sites

As part of a grant from the Department of Labor, the Center for Automotive Research recently published a report highlighting all of the automotive manufacturing facilities that have been closed or re-purposed since 1979. While the report did an excellent job of providing aggregate statistics about a "typical" automotive facility, additional value would be gained from posting the detailed listing of sites online in a user-friendly way.

10. Online Resources and Contact Information

Department of Labor Web Resources:

- Open government webpage: http://www.dol.gov/open
- Online Enforcement Database: http://ogesdw.dol.gov
- Grants Map: http://www.dol.gov/dol/grants/map/
- Ideascale platform: http://www.opendol.ideascale.com
- Regulatory information: http://www.dol.gov/regulations
- Recovery Act information: www.dol.gov/recovery
- FOIA information: http://www.dol.gov/dol/foia
- Congressional testimony: http://www.dol.gov/_sec/media/congress
- Records Management Program: http://www.dol.gov/dol/records/
- Budget information: http://www.dol.gov/budget
- Strategic planning: http://www.dol.gov/_sec/stratplan
- Data collection projects: http://www.reginfo.gov/public/do/PRAMain
- Weekly Secretary's newsletter: http://www.dol.gov/_sec/newsletter
- Tools for America's Job Seekers Challenge: http://www.dol.gov/challenge
- Women's Bureau web chats: http://www.dol.gov/wb/GreenWebinars.htm
- Green jobs initiative: http://www.dol.gov/green
- FOIA reading room: http://www.dol.gov/dol/foia/readroom.htm
- Twitter: http://www.twitter.com/usdol
- Facebook: http://www.facebook.com/departmentoflabor
- YouTube: http://www.youtube.com/usdepartmentoflabor

Federal Web Resources:

- Regulatory information: http://www.regulations.gov
- Recovery Act information: http://www.recovery.gov
- IT Dashboard: http://it.usaspending.gov
- USAspending.gov Data Quality Evaluation: http://www.usaspending.gov/data/dataquality.php

Useful Contact Information

- Open Government Email: open@dol.gov
- National Toll-Free Contact Center. Live assistance is available Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Eastern Time by calling, 1-866-4-USA-DOL, TTY: 1-877-889-5627.
- <u>Phone Numbers by Topic</u>. Search for a Departmental phone number based on the topic of your question.
- <u>The Leadership Team</u>. A list of phone numbers for key personnel in the Department.
- Email General Questions
- <u>Email Technical Questions</u> for accessibility problem, difficulty navigating our site, to report a broken link, or if you have some other technical question.